

to hit her. Thereupon the other woman seized Kitsune's two hands and whipped her once. The whip cut the flesh. Then she used another whip which also cut the flesh. Presently ten whips had cut the flesh.

Kitsune said, "I give up! I am sorry for what I have done." The other woman, whose strength was obviously greater than Kitsune's, insisted, "From now on you shall not live in this market. If you dare do so, I will beat you to death." Completely subdued, Kitsune did not live in the market or steal again, and people in the market rejoiced over the restoration of peace.

There has always been someone in the world with great physical power. Indeed, we know such power is attained as a result of causes in past lives.<sup>7</sup>

## S

### *On Gaining an Immediate Penalty for Sacrificing Oxen to a Pagan Deity and the Merit of Good Deeds of Freeing Living Beings<sup>1</sup>*

In the village of Nadekubo, Higashinari district, Settsu province 攝津國東生郡撫田村,<sup>2</sup> there was a wealthy householder, whose name is unknown. In the reign of ex-Emperor Shōmu, the householder, fearful of the evil influence of a Chinese deity,<sup>3</sup> held services for seven years, sacrificing an ox each year until he had killed seven.<sup>4</sup> At the end of seven years he contracted a serious disease, and, during the following seven years, neither doctor nor medicine could cure him. He called diviners<sup>5</sup> to purify and pray for him, but his disease became worse. Then it occurred to him that his serious disease must have been caused by his past deeds of killing; after that he never failed in keeping the precepts and freeing living beings on the six holy days of each month.<sup>6</sup> When he saw someone killing living beings, he would buy

7. The compiler's attempt to make native legends put on Buddhist clothing is obvious in the victory of the Venerable Dōjō's descendants over the descendants of the fox, and in the ascribing of strength to the ancestor's merit.

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XX, 15).

2. Present Higashinari-ku, Ōsaka-shi 大阪市東成區.

3. 漢神.

4. Animal sacrifice was foreign to Japan. See *Shoku Nihongi*, XL (Enryaku 10:9:5).

5. 卜者 *kamagiri*; see Chap. II(3)a, n. 124.

6. 六節 *rokusetsu* probably means 六齋日 *rokukusanichi*, six holy days: 8, 14, 15, 23, 29, and 30 of each month, when lay Buddhists keep the first eight of the ten precepts and devote themselves to doing good.

them without asking their price, and he would send for living beings to buy and set them free.

When he was dying at the end of the seven years, he said to his family, "Don't cremate my corpse after I die, but keep it for nine days."<sup>7</sup> After his death they did as he had told them, waiting for the promised day. When nine days had passed, he came back to life and told this story:

"There were seven subhumans,<sup>8</sup> each with the head of an ox and a human body. They bound me by the hair and led me along under guard. In front of us there appeared a towering palace. I asked, 'What palace is this?' but they only gave me a terrifying look and said, 'Go on quickly!'

"When we entered the palace gate, they said, 'We have brought him.' I realized that they were addressing King Yama.<sup>9</sup> He asked them, 'Is this man the enemy who killed you?' In reply, they said, 'Yes, he is the one.' Presently they brought a chopping board and knife and said, 'Hurry and pass sentence on him! We are going to chop him up and eat him the way he did us!'

"At that moment ten million men suddenly appeared to unbind me, saying, 'This man is not accountable for that accusation, for he killed them to make offerings to the evil deity which had haunted him.' Thereupon the seven subhumans and ten million men fought over me every day like water and fire. The king refrained from judging me. The subhumans continued to argue, saying, 'It is evident that this person was the host who cut off our limbs, held the service at the shrine<sup>10</sup> for his own benefit, and chopped us up to eat.' The ten million men, on the other hand, appealed to the king, saying, 'We know very well that the deity is to blame, and not this man. Remember, Your Majesty, that truth has more witnesses.'<sup>11</sup>

"Eight days passed in this way, and on the evening of the eighth day I was told to appear at court the following day. On the ninth day I went to the court as I had been told. Presently the king said to me, 'As most of our judgments are formed by what witnesses say, we side

7. Common people were buried within a day after their death. See Chap. II(3)a. Cf. *Nihon shoki* (Taika 2:3:22); Aston, "Nihongi," II, 219.

8. 非人 *hinin*.

9. 閻羅王 *Enraō*; see Chap. II(1)c.

10. 廟 *byō* (Ch. *miào*), Chinese temple or shrine.

11. The other possible interpretation is: "We know very well that the deity is to blame, and not this man." The king thought that the truth was on the side of the majority of witnesses. 我等委曲知非此人咎 識鬼神咎 王自思惟 理處多證.



with the majority.' The sentence was thus given. When the seven oxen heard this, they licked their lips and swallowed, pretending to chop up and eat my flesh. Indignantly, they raised their swords, saying severally, 'How can we forget our vengeance? We will have revenge some day.' The ten million men surrounded me and left the palace, carrying me on a palanquin and leading the way with upheld banners; they saw me off with praise, and knelt to salute me. All of them looked alike. I asked them, saying, 'Who are you?' They answered, 'We are the creatures you set free. Because we can never forget your kindness, we have merely come to repay you.'

After his return from the palace of King Yama, he made more and more vows. After that he never worshiped any deities, but had faith in the Three Treasures, turned his house into a temple by raising a banner<sup>12</sup> and enshrining a Buddha-image, and practiced the teaching and freeing of living beings. The temple was called the Nade-dō 那天堂.<sup>13</sup> Being spared from illness, the man finally died past the age of ninety.

One *Vinaya-kyō*<sup>14</sup> says as follows: "As Kāludāyī<sup>15</sup> was once a priest and sacrificed a sheep, he was killed, revenged by a Brahman wife, even after he had attained arhatship . . ."<sup>16</sup> The *Saishō-kyō*<sup>17</sup> gives the following passage to the same effect: "Rusui-chōza 流水長者 set free ten thousand fish, which were reborn in heaven and repaid his kindness by presenting him with forty thousand jewels."

## 6

### *On Copying the Hoke-kyō with Utmost Devotion and Witnessing an Extraordinary Event*

In the reign of Emperor Shōmu, there was a man who made a vow in Sagaraka district, Yamashiro province 山背國相樂郡.<sup>2</sup> His name is

12. 幢 *hatahoko*, a symbol of dharma, hence, a temple; see I.1, n. 7; Preface, n. 7, above.
13. It was named after the village Nade-kubo. Private temples were often named after the village; see Chap. I(1)d.
14. *Vinaya-kyō* 毘奈耶經, IX (*Taishō*, XXIV, 893); quoted in the *Shokyō yōshū*, XIV (*Taishō*, LIV, 129).
15. A disciple of Śākyamuni; a Brahman who performed a sacrificial rite.
16. 羅漢 *rakam*, a shortened form of 阿羅漢, transliterated from Skt. *arhat*, which means "one who is free from craving and rebirth."
17. *Konkōmyō saishō-kyō*, XVI (*Taishō*, XVI, 352b–353c).

1. Cf. *Sanbō ekotoba* (II, 10), *Hokke kenki* (III, 105), *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XII, 26).
2. Present Sōraku-gun, Kyoto-fu 京都府相樂郡.

unknown. He copied the *Hoke-kyō* in order to repay the four kinds of blessing<sup>3</sup> and sent his messengers to the four quarters in search of sandalwood<sup>4</sup> to make a container for the scrolls of the scripture.<sup>5</sup> Eventually he bought it in the capital of Nara for one hundred *kan*<sup>6</sup> and asked a craftsman to measure and make a container. When he tried to put the scrolls in it, he found he could not do so because the chest was too short. He was terribly disappointed, for he did not see how he could acquire such materials again. Therefore he made a vow, held a service as directed in the scripture, invited monks to confess offenses for three weeks, and wailing, he pleaded, "Please let me find such wood again."

After two weeks he tried to put the scrolls in the chest and found that it had stretched a little of its own accord though it was still a little shorter than the scrolls. The man tried harder to discipline himself<sup>7</sup> and to repent, and, at the end of the third week, he could put the scrolls in the chest. Wondering whether the scrolls had become shorter or the chest larger, he compared them with the original and found they were the same length. Indeed, we know that this was a test of the vower's supreme faith and a sign of the miraculous power of the Mahayana scripture. There can be no doubt about it.

## 7

### *On a Wise Man Who Abused an Incarnated Sage out of Envy, Visited the Palace of King Yama, and Experienced Suffering in Hell*<sup>1</sup>

Saka Chikō<sup>2</sup> was a monk of Sukita-dera 鰯田寺<sup>3</sup> in Asukabe dis-

3. 四恩; see Chap. II(2)a, nn. 69, 70.
4. 白檀紫檀, literally, white sandalwood and purple sandalwood which is solid, lustrous, and fragrant. Brought to Japan by Buddhist monks, it was highly valued and used to make chests for scriptures, Buddhist images, altars, etc. It was rare and very expensive since it had to be imported.
5. 大乘 *daijō*; a Mahayana scripture, in this case the *Hoke-kyō*.
6. 貫; monetary unit consisting of 1,000 *mon* 文, coins.
7. 精進 *shōjin*, a translation of Skt. *vīrya*; the mind and deed to make the utmost effort to attain the path. In the popular understanding it means purifying oneself and abstaining from eating meat and drinking rice wine.
1. Cf. *Sanbō ekotoba* (II, 3), *Hokke kenki* (I, 2), *Fusō ryakki* (II, Shōmu), *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XI, 2), *Nihon ōjō gokurakuki*, etc. See Chap. II(2)c.
2. For Saka (or Shaku) 鰯, see I.14, n. 2. Chikō (b. 709), an eminent monk of Gangō-ji and the Sanron School 三論宗 in Chi-tsang's tradition (see Chap. I(1)c, n. 66), is also known for his faith in the pure land. See Inoue Mitsusada, *Nihon Jōdo-kyō seiritsushi no kenkyū*, 48–58.
3. Unidentified.